

Some examples of communicative activities

Enquiry and elimination

Using two matching posters or a set of matching picture cards one student chooses a card or identifies an object on the poster (unseen by the other participants). The other students must guess what it is by asking yes/no questions, thus allowing them to eliminate certain characteristics. Celebrity heads is another similar example of enquiry and elimination

Barrier games

Otherwise known as **information gap activities** the aim is for each student to share their information with the other students in order to complete the task. This can be done in pairs or teams. By taking turns, students ask questions in order to obtain information and complete the task, e.g. spot the difference, crosswords with down clues on one and across clues on the other, matrices with different information on each, describe and draw where one student describes and the other must draw what is described, cloze passage where the students have different words missing.

Rank ordering

Group or pairs of students rank items and justify their decisions.

Sorting and classifying

In pairs or groups, students sort objects into various categories (which may be determined by you or by the student) and justify their classification.

Sequencing

In pairs, students sequence a series of pictures, dialogue, life cycles, texts etc, and recount the events.

Matching

In large groups students must match sentence halves, picture halves, words and pictures.

Dictogloss

Students are read a short text and must listen for meaning. Students listen to the text a second time and note the key words and clauses. The text is read a third time for clarification and then the students reconstruct the text by talking in pairs or groups.



Following are some examples of the activities described for you to try.

Enquiry and Elimination Games

Enquiry and elimination 1

Materials:

- a. A picture or group of pictures which may be enlarged e.g. pictures from a book, wrapping paper or poster related to a particular theme. A completed matrix may also be used.
- b. A second copy of the above cut into small cards.

(Where no poster is available two sets of matching cards may be used: one set is placed on the floor or table for the group to see, the other is used for selection)

Alternatively, two sets of real materials may be used e.g. shells, plastic farm animals etc.

During each of the above activities students should:

- *be in pairs or small groups to facilitate discussion;*
- *be actively encouraged to discuss all parts of the activity in their first language or English as appropriate in order to develop an understanding of the activity;*
- *be asked to justify or give reason for their choice.*

For students to develop the skills necessary for effective participation in enquiry and elimination games it is essential that they first build up familiarity with the picture in question. This can be achieved through a variety of strategies, some of which are listed below.

- **Matching** individual pictures to the big picture.
- Answering and making up **riddles** about items in the picture.
- Classifying the small cards allows children to develop ideas about the many different ways they can group and describe items in the pictures, e.g. by size, colour, use, habitat, likes, dislikes etc.

Enquiry and Elimination 2

Grouping: small group

Instructions:

- The poster or chart is placed where all members of the group can see it.
- The small cards are distributed evenly to all players.
- In turn players select a small card or pictures from their bundle.
- Other students ask questions to elicit information.
- The student holding the card may answer only 'yes' or 'no'.
- By the process of elimination the questioners discover the identity of the chosen card.

Enquiry and Elimination 3

Grouping: *small group*

Instructions:

- *The poster or chart is placed where all members of the group can see it.*
- *The small cards are distributed evenly to all players.*
- *In turn players select a small card or picture from their bundle and give a description as a clue to its identity.*
- *Other students ask questions to elicit further information.*
- *By the process of elimination they discover its identity.*
- *It may be necessary for teachers to model appropriate descriptions and questions.*
- *Alternative 2 is easier for students with limited English since they may be able to understand questions being asked and respond with a 'yes' or 'no' rather than having to produce language to describe the card*

Jigsaw

The main skills required in a jigsaw activity are:

- *Reading (extracting information)*
- *Note taking*
- *Summarising.*
- *Listening for required information.*

Preparation

- *Choose text of appropriate level*
- *Cut text into three discreet chunks*
- *Devise focus questions for each chunk*
- *Colour code chunks and focus questions.*

Part 1

- *Divide class into groups of three*
- *Give each group a set of colour coded focus questions*
- *Students join same colour group*
- *Students read chunk and take relevant notes*
- *Teacher collects chunks.*

Part 2

- *Students return to original group*
- *Students report in turn*

Jigsaw Tasks – (from Friederike Klippel)

Keep Talking “Communicative fluency activities for language teaching”

Enquiry and Elimination: Go, ask and tell**Preparation**

- Choose text of appropriate level.
- Cut and paste original text into two complementary texts.
- Label complementary texts 'text A' and 'text B'.
- Devise and label comprehension questions for text A and text B (maximum 10 questions).

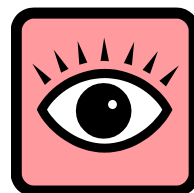
The lesson

- Divide the class into groups A and B.
- Distribute the same text **both groups**
- Ask students to read the text and discuss.
- Distributes copies of 'A' questions to all the students in group A and 'B' questions to all students in group B.
- Students read questions, discuss and record answers on answer sheet provided.
- Teacher collects all copies of the text.
- At this stage each 'A' group member should have all answers to 'A' questions and each 'B' group member should have all answers to 'B' questions.
- Distribute copies of 'A' questions to group B members and 'B' questions to group A members. Now each 'A' group member will have answers to 'A' questions and a set of unanswered questions for the as yet unseen complementary 'B' text (and vice versa).
- Form the class into pairs, each with an 'A' and 'B' group member facing each other.
- 'A' and 'B' students ask each other questions alternately to complete unanswered questions.
- 'A' and 'B' students should now have answers to both sets of questions.

Enquiry and Elimination: I Spy

A student selects an item from one of the pictures and says:

'I spy with my little eye, something that...' (gives a specific clue to its identity) or 'I'm thinking of something/someone that...'



Other members of group ask questions to enable them to guess the identity of the character or the item.

When giving clues about characters of a story, students may describe an action or characteristic

'...something which hopped off...' or

'...something that had horrible fur...'

Barrier games**Barrier Game 1**

Grouping: pairs or small group

Materials:

Two sets of information/pictures.

A barrier (may be physical e.g. a sheet of card board, or an information gap).

Instructions:

Students work in pairs.

Each student has information which the other must obtain in order to complete a task.

Taking turns, students ask questions in order to obtain information and complete tasks.

Barrier Game 2

Grouping: pairs or small group

Materials:

Two sets of materials: A completed information/picture is placed behind a screen at the front of the room. Another set is given to each pair.

Instructions:

- *One group member (the observer) is allowed to go and view the picture/information for 3 seconds and return to the group.*
- *The observer then describes the picture or information to the group (but must keep their hands behind their back at all times.) Verbal clues only may be given.*
- *Observers may return several times to view the information or picture but only for three seconds each time.*
- *Once the observer believes the information/picture is complete and correct it may be shown to the judge and compared with the master copy.*
- *Where several groups are working at the same time, the winning team will not always be the first finished but rather the most observant and best at giving instructions.*

Variation:

As above but using a different observer each time.

Barrier Game 3

Grouping: pairs or small group

Instructions:

- Students work in pairs.
- Distribute one set of picture cards to each partner.
- Place a barrier between the students.
- One partner arranges a set of cards into any sequence of two or three rows.
- They then give instructions to the other partner on how to order their set of cards into the same arrangement.
- Once completed, the students visually compare arrangements and discuss similarity.

Barrier Games are excellent for practising:

- ordinal position (1st, 2nd, 3rd etc)
- positional vocabulary (in, on, under etc)

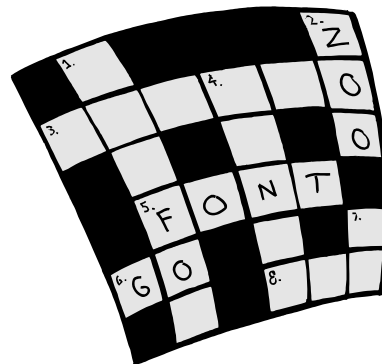
Communicative Crossword

Grouping: pairs or small group

Materials:

Two crossword puzzles:

- One with the down words filled in
- The other with the across words filled in.



Instructions:

- Students work in pairs.
- One partner has the 'across' page and the other has the 'down' page.
- Partners are not to look at each other's puzzle.
- Each partner reads their clues so that the other can work out their missing words.
- Partners can ask for clues (work a limit if necessary)
- Once all words on both puzzles have been completed partners check and discuss.

Variation: No clues required. Students make up their own clues to describe the words for each word.

Spot the Differences

Grouping: pairs or small group

Materials:

Two enlarged copies of picture cards.

Alter one of the copies by adding or deleting details. (Liquid paper is ideal for this)

Instructions:

- Students form pairs and are each given one of the pictures. Neither partner is to see the other's picture.
- The two partners describe their pictures in turn and decide on the differences between them by asking and answering questions.
- When they agree on a difference it is recorded.
- When they have identified all the differences, students compare their pictures visually and discuss their results.

Paired Word search

Grouping: pairs or small group

Materials:

One word search puzzle.

One list of words or a word puzzle showing the location of words.

Instructions:

- Students work in pairs.
- The student with the list of words gives the partner directions and clues to the location and identity of the words in the puzzle.



Rank ordering: *Clines*

Clines are a scale of continuous gradation. Students can rank anything as long as they can justify their choice!

Grouping: pairs or small group

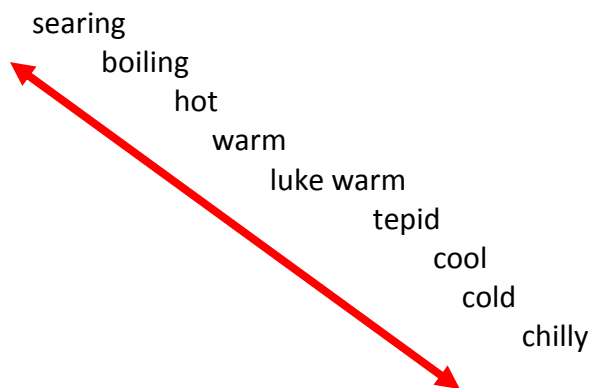
Materials:

1 graded either a vertical axis diagram or a diagonal

a list of related words:

- of similar meaning- word that mean **bad/good** from a story
- linked to an activity – things to take to camp
- within a topic- foods they like /dislike or words from hot to cold

e.g



_ nasty spiteful mean cruel horrible wicked evil bad +



_ peas carrots corn cabbage potatoes onions cucumber zucchini capsicum bokchoy broccoli spinach +



Sorting and classifying: *Matrix Activities***Grouping:** *pairs or small group***Materials:***A copy of a matrix or grid.***Instructions:**

- *In pairs or groups students consider information given along the top and side of the matrix and fill in the matrix squares appropriately.*
- *Information may be recorded in words, sentences or pictures.*
- *(NSW Department of Education, Science Learning and Language 1988 p. 45)*
- *A matrix is a way of providing visual and textual support for students.*
- *Spaces left for students' own categories or questions also allows for their individual experiences and backgrounds to be recognised.*

LEARNER D	Learner A	Learner B	Learner C	Learner D
	BIRD A	BIRD B	BIRD C	BIRD D
Black head				
Long legs	x			
Sharp claws			x	
Long neck		x		
Webbed feet		x		x
Short beak			x	
Black feathers				x
Short wings	x			

Sorting and classifying: Logic Matrix**Grouping:** pairs or small group**Materials:***A copy of the logic matrix**Some logic matrix sentences***Instructions:**

- *Distribute a logic matrix to the students. Read all sentences through once to students.*
- *Read the first sentence again. Students listen to the sentence and decide what information can be used from the sentence to complete spaces on the matrix.*
- *Read each sentence in sequence.*

The completed matrix can be used as part of an enquiry and elimination activity.E.g. All about us*

	12	14	16	18	20
Name					
Sport					
Pet					
Hobby					
Favourite Food					

All about us – Clues

1. Joe, Taj and Alexi are boys.	6. The mice, terrier and parrot live with boys and the canaries and cats live with girls.	11. The boy at no. 12 does not keep mice but he does play chess.
2. The sports are basketball, tennis, swimming, soccer and athletics	7. The girl at no. 20 plays tennis and keeps a cat.	12. The mice owner likes to read
3. No ball game player lives next to another.	8. The boy at no. 16 keeps a bird and does woodwork for a hobby.	13. The gardener lives between the art lover and the carpenter.
4. The favourite food begins with the same letter as the person's hobby.	9. Leah, who likes gardening, enjoys athletics.	14. The swimmer at no. 14 does not eat avocados.
5. The foods are cheese, rice, weetbix, grapes and avocado.	10. Alexi, who lives between Taj and Leah, plays basketball.	15. May lives at the end of the street.

Sorting and classifying: Structured Overview

This method serves as a means of organizing language items so that it may be easily understood by the students. This may be done in the form of webs, concept maps, or outlines. This method of instruction may be used in most curriculum areas.

Materials:

Chart paper and markers

Grouping: pairs or small group

Instructions:

Group members collaboratively organise the words in some way. The outcome is an overview of the topic or story. This may be used as a basis for writing.

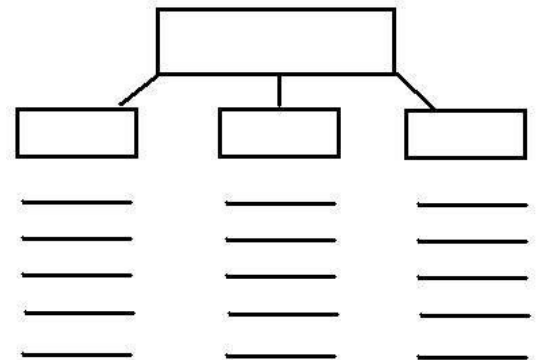
**Sorting and classifying: Vocabulary Cluster****Materials:**

Chart paper and markers

Grouping: pairs or small group

Instructions:

- *Students brainstorm and write words associated with a selected theme, character, story or topic.*
- *Words are written in clusters around the topic e.g. Clusters may be displayed and words added by the group throughout the unit of work and may be used as stimulus for writing activities.*

Sequencing: *Sequencing and Retelling*

Picture Sequencing

Picture sequencing may be done without the story being read aloud. However, teachers must ensure that:

- *Students have heard the story several times and have participated in a range of activities related to the story;*
- *The actual book is available for reference and self checking;*
- *Students are working in pairs or groups and discussion is built into the task.*
- *Teachers increase number of cards according to students' language competence.*

Picture Sequencing 1

The story is read or the taped story played.

Students listen to the story and in pairs put the pictures in order.

Oral Picture Sentence Match

Grouping: *pairs or small group*

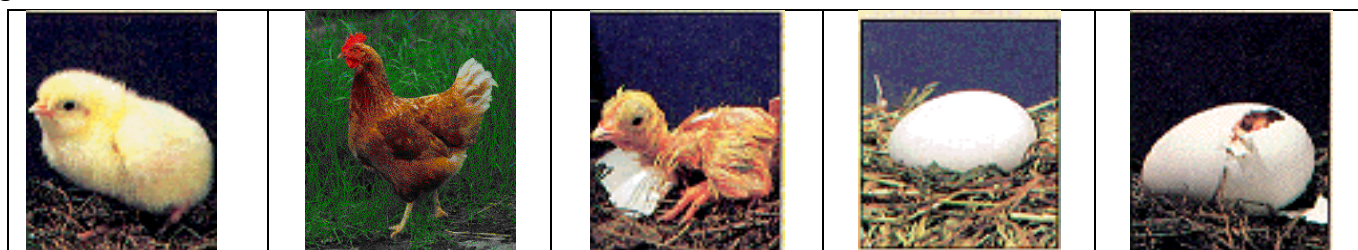
Materials:

Uncut page of picture cards and a pencil for each pair of students.

Instructions:

- *The teacher or capable reader reads, in the correct sequence, a sentence relating to each picture.*
- *Students number the matching picture as they hear the appropriate sentence.*
- *After all of the sentences have been read individually, the whole sequence is read through for re-checking.*
- *Students compare their sequence with those of other pairs.*
- *Students can also use the numbered pictures to retell the story in sequence.*

e.g.



Sentence Sequencing

Grouping: pairs or small group

- As for picture sequencing, but students sequence the sentence strips and match with the picture cards.
- Students may prefer to sequence pictures first then add sentences;
or
- Sequence sentences first adding pictures;
or
- They may match pictures and sentences and then sequence.

An additional set of sentence strips for each sentence may be cut into word segments for further matching. (It is more difficult for students to sequence single words than it is to sequence whole sentences as sentences have more contextual cues).

e.g.

Planting seeds

- Cover the seeds with dirt.
- Put seeds in the holes.
- Get a small shovel to dig some holes.
- Water the seeds.
- Pick the flowers and put them in a vase.
- Go to the store to buy some flower seeds.
- Wait for the seeds to grow into flowers.
- Bring the seeds home and decide where to plant them.



Matching: Picture Sentence Match

Grouping: pairs or small groups

student can:

- Students match words, phrases or sentences to pictures.
- Students are shown a picture with two possible captions and indicate which one is correct.
- Students are shown two or three pictures and a sentence, which relates to one picture where students must indicate which picture is referred to in the sentence.
- Students indicate with a yes/no or true/false card at the end of a simple statement.

During each of the above activities students should:

- be in pairs or small groups to facilitate discussion;
- have an opportunity to discuss and decide on their choice;
- be asked to justify or give reason for the choice.

Bingo

Grouping: pairs or small groups

Materials:

Bingo card, Single word or number cards, counters

Instructions:

- Choose 25 words from KLA or literacy text or related activity.
- Place them randomly on the bingo card with 9 squares, 16 squares or 25 squares (depending on age).
- Prepare enough of these cards for the students in the group, writing words in a different order on each.
- Select a 'caller' who places single word cards face down.
- The caller selects a word at a time and reads it aloud.
- Players place counters over the words on their bingo cards.
- The first player to have three complete lines is the winner.
- The winner reads the three winning lines of words and becomes the next caller.



Dictogloss

A dictagloss is an integrative teaching or testing device in which bursts of language are read out at normal speeds to language learners who attempt to write down what they hear as accurately as possible. The bursts are long enough so that learners cannot record or memorise what they hear word for word. Learners are required to reconstruct sentences from their global understanding and from the memory cue that their notes provide and must bring their knowledge of grammar/the language into play. It is only superficially similar to dictation because here the learners try to semantically approximate the original text using their own grammatical and linguistic resources.

Summary of notes from Grammar Workout: Ruth Wajnryb

There are four stages in the procedure:

1. **Preparation:** learners find out about the topic of the text and are prepared for some of the vocabulary.
2. **Dictation:** learners hear the text and listen only then they hear the text and take fragmentary notes then learners hear the text again (YES times!).
3. **Reconstruction:** learners reconstruct the text on the basis of the fragments recorded in the dictation
4. **Analysis and correction:** learners analyse and correct their texts.

Producing a sound English text

The text should be sound in three senses:

- It should be grammatically accurate.
- It should be textually cohesive.
- It should make logical sense in terms of our knowledge of the world.